

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6698

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 3193

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC (WIDEMAN, BERNARD)

SUBJECT: BERNARD WIDEMAN

REF: (A) STATE 046469; (B) MANILA 2630

1. IN PARA 4 REFTTEL B, WE INDICATED THAT SINCE THERE POSSIBILITY HEARINGS MIGHT DRANG ON WE WOULD BE REPORTING SIGNIFICANT HIGH-LIGHTS AND NOT PROVIDING SUMMARIES OF EACH SESSION. AT FEBRUARY 25 HEARINGS THERE WAS NO REPEAT NO DISCUSSION OF BENEDICTO CHARGES.

GOVERNMENT PRESENTED WITNESSES WHO TESTIFIED ABOUT WIDEMAN CONTACTS WITH ALLEGED SUBVERSIVES AND ALLEGED PROVACTIVE ACTS DURING PUBLIC MEETINGS. WIDEMAN'S ATTORNEY SENATOR SALONGA CONTINUED DEVASTING CROSS EXAMINATION OF INEPT WITNESSES.

2. AT TODAY'S SESSION (MARCH 3), GOVERNMENT EXHIBITED PHOTS OF WIDEMAN AT VARIOUS DEMONSTRATIONS, AS WELL AS VIDEO TAPE OF SIGNS OF THE TIMES CLOSING. IN PHOTOS WIDEMAN APPEARED AS OBSERVER AND CERTAINLY DID NOT APPEAR TO BE HARANGUEING CROWD AS GOVERNMENT HAS CHARGED. SINCE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT WITNESSES UNAVAILABLE, HEARING QUICKLY ADJOURNED UNTIL MARCH 7. SALONGA ALSO PROVIDED COMMISSION WITH WIDEMAN'S REPLY TO BENEDICTO'S CHARGES WHICH WIDEMAN HAS PROMISED MAKE AVAILABLE TO US. BEGIN FYI - FOR MORE BACKGROUND OF THESE CHARGES WE ARE POUCHING EA/PHL TRANSCRIPT OF CONFIDENTIAL

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MARCOS' OFF-THE-RECORD INTERVIEW WITH FEER EDITOR DAVIES. IN THIS CONNECTION WIDEMAN TOLD CONSOFF AT TODAY'S HEARING HE UNDERSTOOD INFOSEC TATAD HAD BEEN DISPATCHED TO HONG KONG TO SEE DAVIES. WIDEMAN THEORIZES TATAD TRIP MAY BE CONNECTED WITH HIS CASE. END FYI.

3. SENATOR SALONGA TOLD EMBOFF EVENING MARCH 1 HEARINGS

ARE BASICALLY A SIDESHOW. HE SAID DECISION ON WHETHER WIDEMAN IS ALLOWED TO STAY OR GO WILL BE MADE BY PRESIDENT MARCOS WHO HAS STILL NOT MADE UP HIS MIND. IN THIS CONNECTION, VALENCIA FEBRUARY 26 COLUMN IN EXPRESS STATED: "AS I SEE IT WHILE WE DEPLORE THE STORIES WRITTEN BY AND ATTRIBUTED TO BERNARD WIDEMAN, THE WASHINGTON POST-FEER CONTRIBUTOR, THE BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION HAS NO GOOD REASON TO THROW HIM OUT OF THE COUNTRY OR REFUSE HIM ENTRY. WE'RE NOT NOING TO GET ANY BETTER CORRESPONDENTS THAN WIDEMAN. HE'S AS MUCH A VICTIM OF THE SYSTEM AS WE ARE." WIDEMAN TOLD EMBOFF, HOWEVER, VALENCIA BLOWS HOT AND COLD AS MARCOS WISHES, SO HE IS NOT TAKING ANY PARTICULAR COMFORT FROM THIS COLUMN.

4. COMMENT: WE BELIEVE MARCOS IS STILL MULLING OVER WHAT TO DO ABOUT WIDEMAN. SHOULD HE ALLOW HIM TO STAY, WE SUSPECT MARCOS COULD LET HEARINGS DRAG ON FOR LONG TIME (AS WAS CASE IN GERLOCK'S FIRST HEARING) IN HOPE EVERYONE WILL SIMPLY FORGET IT.
SULLIVAN

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